

A PLAINE AND FAMILIAR Exposition of the Ninth and Tenth Chapters of the Prouerbs of Salomon.

MATTHEW. 13. 35.

*I will open my mouth in Parables, and will utter
the thinges which haue beene kept secret from
the foundation of the world.*



LONDON

Printed by T.E. for Thomas Man, dwelling in
Paternoster-Row at the signe of the Talbot.

1606.

APPLAINED
AND FAMILIAR
Exposition of the Ninth
and Tenth Chapters of the
Epistles of Paul.

MATTHEW 13:1-17
The Lord Jesus Christ is here
represented as a husbandman
who sows the seed of the
kingdom of heaven in the hearts
of men.



10:1481

Printed by T. E. for Thomas New, dwelling in
Paternoster Row at the sign of the Talbot
1662



To the Right VVorshipfull

Sir *Anthonie Cope*, Knight,

grace, mercie, and peace bee
multiplied.



If, your louing acceptance of our former treatise, together with the good entertainment which it hath found with many christian readers, hath much encouraged vs to dedicate this also to your fauourable patronage. Wee are now more willing to make some work for the presse, because we haue no imployment in the pulpit. And who knoweth but that others (whom God hath graced with far greater sufficiencie) may bee stirred vp heereby, to publish some of their godly meditations: that as their faithfull labours were formerly like pure fountaines, which did onely refresh their particular congregations: so now, by meanes of printing, they may bee made like great and comfortable riuers, to water the whole land.

And whereas we and our families haue plentifully tasted of your goodnesse and mercie, we thought it our bounden duties to manifest our vnfeined thankfulness for the same: that other Patrons may

A. iij.

be

The Epistle Dedicatorie.

be moued by your example, to shew the like compassion to their distressed Ministers, that you haue done to vs and ours, if our successe fall out according to our hope, we purpose (by Gods assistance) to proceed further in this booke of the Prouerbs, in the same methode which is heere already begun, if otherwise: yet this is our comfort, that it hath beene, and is our continuall care, and hearts desire, to keepe a good conscience, and to recompence our present silence with the best seruice that we are able to performe vnto the Church. The God of all mercie and comfort, multiplie his gracious blessings vpon you more and more, and graunt all peace and prosperitie to all those that faithfully loue and seeke, the peace of the Church, and the prosperitie of the Gospell.

Your worships in all Christian

duties to bee commaunded,

John Dod, Roberts Cleaver.

To the Christian Reader.



*He wisdom of God, who best knoweth
every mans affections, doth testifie, that
such as are full doe loath an hony Prou.27.7.
combe: but to them that are hungry
such things becomme sweete.
That which is very good,
and desired of the best, is distasted of some
as regard not instruction: but that which
is good at all, though meane, and despi-*

*sed of the most, is sauoury to such as soundly seeke saluation. The
perswasion whereof hath encouraged vs to bring forth our promise,
and to set before thee such food as God hath enabled vs to prepare.
We rest assured of thy Christian love towards vs, & providence for
thine owne soule, that thou wilt be more affected with the matter of
this treatise, being, as we hope, sound, and without corruption, not
offended with the manner thereof, being homely, and without elegancie.
As in expounding this Scripture to our owne flocks, we respected
the capacitie of our vnlearned hearers, so in publishing the same to
others, we tender the profit of the simplest readers. And as for them
that are iudicious, and Godly learned, we presume that their owne
knowledge, & the reading of more excellent discourses, will minister
wisdom, to make their vse of this slender worke, as this worke will
give them occasion to esteeme the better of more excellent discourses.
We haue thought good to choose these two Chapters to beginne
with, though almost in the midst of the booke, that we might propose
to thee a patterne of the exposition of both sorts of parables,
as well of such as are set downe in forme of a treatise, and continued
discourse, as of those which are for the most part single sentences.
If thou shalt iudge, that there may be any fruit of these travells,*

wee

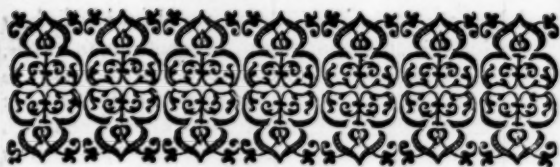
To the Christian Reader.

we are minded, if God will, to explicate the rest, but by parts, and at severall times, and not all entirely together. Now in reading of this, observe that the reasons and uses of the points, are not inferred upon the allegations, or amplifications, immediately going before, but depend upon the propositions which are the doctrines raised out of the severall verses: And into them are we compelled to enter abruptly without any precedent introduction to lead us, least we should either weary our selves in seeking variety of preambles, or wearie thee with innumerable tautologies and repetitions. In the printing, the pointing in sundry places is misplaced, which in reading thou shalt easily finde, and we hope wilt rectify.

The God ^{of} grace grant thee that grace which we can but wish, and by the efficacy of his spirit worke in thine heart the vertue and power of this his holy word, which we can onely by tongue and penne declare unto thee. Amen.

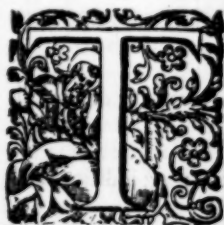
ERRATA.

Folio 4, line 2. read professe. fol. 6. l. 34. read nouriture. fol. 22. l. 18. read describing. fol. 23. l. 23. read discourse. fol. 98. l. 9. read heart. fol. 111. put out, doth, the first word of the line. Other faulks, friendly Reader, where thou findest any, I pray thee favorably beare with.



A Learned and Fruitfull
Exposition vpon the ninth
Chapter of the Prouerbes
of Salomon.

Prouerbs Cap 9 Ver. 1.



His Chapter doth containe a brieft
recapitulation or summarie almost of
all the former eight Chapters : con-
taining. First the holy instructions of
Wisedome, in the person of a Prin-
cesse or great Lady making a ban-
quet. Secondly, the deceiueable and
entising flatteries of Sinfulnesse and
Folly, in the person of a smoth and guilefull harlot.

Wisedome hath built her house, &c.

Verse, 1.

(*Wisedome or Wisedomes*) viz. the most absolute and soue-
raigne Wisedome, the Lord Iesus Christ, who is the perfect
wisedome of his father, (*hath built her house*) that is the Church,
which is so called, 1. Tim. 3. 15. (*and hewen out her seauen pillars*)
that is, hath most firmly founded, and perpetually supporteth
it with his owne hand, which is more powerfull for it, than
many pillars and buttresses are to sustaine a materiall building,
whereby also is intended that the Churches safetie is accom-
panied with beautie, as hauing pillars hewen out and polished,
and not made of rough stones without garnishing.

B.

Wise.

Doct. 1.
All true wisdom
is in
Gods word.

1. Cor. 1.

Reasons. 1.

Chap. 1. 4. 5.

Vsc. 1.

2

3

Wisedome, &c. All true wisedome is contained in the holy word of God, he nameth not power, iustice, truth, or mercie, though these be also there in fulnesse, but wisedome in this case taketh the first place, and shineth out in greatest brightnesse: In regard whereof, the Apostle with a kind of insultation, doth expostulate with worldly wise men, *where is the wise? where is the Scribe? hath not God made the wisedome of this world foolishnesse?* that is, whatsoeuer policie or reason doth compare with the wisedome of the spirit, or is repugnant to it, or not sanctified by it, that the Lord in word reproveth, and in deede confoundeth.

First, it ouermatcheth and ouerthroweth all the craft of cunning men, and the subtiltie of Sathan himselfe: for whatsoever plots or practises of mischief hee hath seemed most to preuaile in, haue alwayes turned to the ruine of his owne kingdom, and albeit he suggest new temptations, and raise vp new errors, and deuise sinnes of new fashions, yet the Scriptures are euermore readily appointed with new arguments to repell them.

Secondly, it is the fountaine, from whence is deriued all sound vnderstanding, without which no man can attaine to true wisedome: it sharpeneth the wit of the most sillie and ignorant, and addeth to the knowledge of the most iudicious and learned.

Reprofe of them that condemne Gods holy ordinances of folly, and be ashamed of the practise and profession of them: but as for the inuentions of flesh and bloud, the sayings of men and the painted shewes of humane wit, those they haue in high admiration.

Instruction, to renounce and put off our owne carnall reason, and to be directed onely by the commaundements and counsels of God in the Scriptures. Chap. 3. 5. 6.

Consolation against the craftie heads of subtile foxes, which goe about to circumuent poore simple and harmelesse christians: if we can pray against their practises, as *Dauid* did, their purposes and counsels shalbe turned into folly, as *Achitophels* was.

Built

Built her house. &c. It belongeth onely to Christ, both to build and beautifie the Church, which caused *David* though he was king, and seemed to haue the whole disposing of the matter in his owne hand, yet to intreate the Lord to shew mercie to *Zion* and to build vp the wals of *Ierusalem*: that is, to prouide for the safetie, increase and good estate of the godly. If no man, no not *Solomon* bee able by his industrie to build an earthly familie, much lesse can any erect a Church which is Gods spirituall habitation, and to this purpose tends all that is heere ascribed to Wisedome, her house, her pillars, her vittales, her wine, her table, her maides: that is Christ his spirituall house, protection, feast, and messengers, for notwithstanding the ministers be men and not spirits, yet their function is spirituall, and not humane.

Doct. 2.
Christ onely is
the builder &
beautifier of
the Church.
Psal. 51. 18.

Psal 127. 1.

First, hee alone hath the disposing of the word, vouchsafing it to some and denying it to others, according to his owne will. *Psal. 147. 19. 20.* Secondly, no man, nor meanes can bee sufficient to make sufficient ministers, vnlesse hee both furnish and send them forth, *Rom. 10. 25.* Thirdly, his spirit converteth mens soules, and begetteth them to euermlasting life, and so they become stones of this building, for were not the word made mightie and effectuell by him, Sathan would keepe his hold against the preachers, and proude hearts would neuer be brought into subiection. *2. Cor. 10. 4. 5.*

Reasons. 1.
God giues his
word where
he will.

2

3

So far as wee wish well to the Church, let vs by prayers to God procure the welfare thereof, as was practised by *David*, *Nehemiah*, and others, notwithstanding the great accompt they were in with their Princes.

Vse 1.
Psal. 122. 6.

Reproofoe of Papists and others that resist God in his work, attempting to plucke downe that which hee hath set vp, as to hinder the increase of Christians, to stop the passage of the Gospell, and as much as in them is, to restrain the course of all Christianitie, who as they walke in the steps of their brother *Elmas*, so may they looke for thelike successe with him. *Act. 13. 10.*

2

Consolation, that the case of the Church were not desperate, though it should come to passe, that men eyther durst
Bij. not

3

Ila. 59. 16.

Doct. 3.
Christians
onely are in
safety.

Psal. 4.

Reasons.

I

2

1. Kings. 11.

3

not, or would not, or could not promote religion, or protect such as proues it: for Christ will not faile of his faithfulness, as hee is no way disappointed of his help, for his sufficiencie is in himselfe, and the worke belongeth to himselfe, and he will neuer desist from it, vntill it be accomplished.

Seauen pillars. The best way for good safetie is to become a faithfull Christian. Of such the Prophet speaketh, *Psal. 125. They that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be remoued*, wicked men be like to chaffe or dust that hath no stabilitie, but is easilie driven by the winde into puddles and all other filthie places, without any resistance: but it is as easie to ouerturne a great mountaine, as to ouerthrow the hope and good estate of the godly.

First his tender care is continually watchfull for their safetie, as the eye and wings of the henne are alwayes ready to succour her young ones, *Psal. 91. 4.* and nearer are they to him, than the chickens to their damme, as beeing members of his owne body, and the very apple of his eye. *Zach. 2. 8.*

Secondly, his power is alwaies exercised for their preferuation, which was figured by the two brasen pillars in the Temple, the one called *Jachin*, that is, the Lord will establish, and the other *Boaz*, that is, in him is strength: both these conioyned doe make the safetie of his seruants compleate, if he had power, and not applyed it for our help, our case were nothing the better, if he should set himselfe to vphold vs and faile of power, we could not stand, and therefore they were assured by these signes both of the one and the other.

Thirdly, it concerneth him in equitie, to stand for his owne people, that haue cast themselues vpon him, and labour in his seruice, especially he giuing warrantize for their safetie. *Psal. 91. 4.*

Obiect. But they are wronged and spoyled and sometimes also killed.

Answer. Gods prouidence doth not free vs from troubles, but preferue vs in them, for then it is most seasonable. Wisdom did foresee that there would bee assaults, else why did shee make her castle so strong? But this is the happy estate of Christi-

Christians, that though they bee persecuted, yet they bee not forsaken: and though they bee slaine, yet not overcome; because the loue of God remayneth with them, and a blessed reward is prepared for them.

Reproofe of fearefull persons which haue no courage for the truth, that dare not shew themselves in any good cause, which may procure displeasure, nor exercise those seruices which are necessary for their saluation.

Vse. 1.

Secondly, terrour for persecutors and such as oppose themselves against godly Christians: they set themselves to beate downe Gods house vpon his head, to hew out the stones, and dig downe the walles, to plucke downe the timber from off the rooffe: and they imagine that there is neither difficultie nor danger in this attempt, but that they may easily and with impunitie effect their purpose. But howsoever they esteeme it a cottage that standeth on rotten props, they shall finde it a castle that standeth on mightie pillars: and if it stand, they shall fall. And looke how much safety is to the house & them that be in it, so much perill is to the enimies and them that assault it: for he is not onely a wall of defence round about his people, but a wall of fire to consume their enimies. *Zach. 2. 5.*

2

Thirdly, consolation, though the enimies of the Church be neuer so many or mightie, yet doth it stand still impregnable and inuincible: the gates of hell, that is, the power of all the Diuels shall not preuaile against it. And such is the safety of every particular Christian, both for soule and body, for if one stone could bee cast downe, the whole building might bee demolished. *Mat. 16. 18.*

3

Shee hath killed her vitayles, mingled her wine, &c.

Vse. 2.

Mention was made before of Wisedomes house, and the strength of it, and heere of her hospitalitie and house keeping in it; where heauenly things are represented by earthly, and the bountie and magnificence of the Lord, by the plentifull prouision of a liberall feast-maker. For the graces of his spirit by the ministry of the word, are compared to daintie meates and delicious wines, either spiced, or mingled with

B. iij.

choise

choise kinds of coole waters, whereby in those hot countries they were much refreshed. Wherevnto is added the circumstances of readinesse; that there needeth no tariance, or long wayting, but all things are in order and commodiously prepared for the present refection of the guests.

Doct. 1.
The soules
food is the
best fare.

Killed her vitayles, &c. The best cheere is that which is made for the soule in Gods house: which is declared by diuers circumstances in the Parable of the great feast. *Mat. 22. 2. 3.* As that it was made by a King; and therefore not common, but costly according to his royall state and greatnesse: and was also a wedding feast; which is vsually great and full of solemnitie: and made at the marriage of his owne sonne; which consequently would cause it to bee much more sumptuous and magnificent, then if it had beene for a seruant or kinsman, or ordinary person. By all which is meant the Gospell, wherein euery faithfull man is feasted, and made Gods sonne, and married to Christ himselfe.

Reason. 1.

One reason to proue this doctrine is, the resemblance and agreement that is betweene the spirituall foode and corporall meates: it is delightfull to the soule as they bee to the sence: that reuiueth the afflicted and troubled conscience, as they refresh the spirits of a faint and feeble person; and addeth increase of strength and stature to the inward man, as they doe to the outward.

2

Another reason is, the differences that are betweene them; wherein this heavenly & celestiall banquet doth far surmount the earthly. First, this onely is perpetuall, day & night, through the whole yeere, and whole life, and at death and euermore: whereas all others are but for a few daies, and commonly not for many houres. Secondly, heere is no surfet or danger by excesse, though wee continue eating and drinking vncessantly without intermission; which is contrary in corporall repasts. Thirdly, this is a durable meate, and doth minister an abiding nourtriture, that hee that hath once digested it, shall neuer after perish by hunger. Fourthly this doth not onely sustaine life for a time, but giue it and preserue it for euer. Fifthly, whereas all other meates and drinckes, though neuer so plentifull, are
onely

only for the belly, and helpe against nothing but the present hunger and thirst; this bringeth with it safetie, wealth, dignitie, and all happinesse. Sixtly and lastly, heere is open house kept continually for all commers, nations, ages, and states, without any disparagement to the greatest, or contempt of the meanest: none is excluded that is willing to bee admitted: none is vpb rayded for comming too often, the more they frequent the house, the more they shall be made of, and the better welcome.

Confutation of such as stand vpon the merit of man for salvation: all the grace wee partake of, is bestowed vpon vs at *Wisedomes* royall feast; and that is franke and free, and from his owne goodnesse. Great personages, especially Princes vse not to take a shot when they haue giuen entertainment. Vse. 1.

Instruction, that wee come to the word and Sacraments and all the holy ordinances of God as an hungry man to a good feast, with a willing minde, a large desire, a good appetite Isa. 55. 1. and a certaine expectation to bee satisfied. 2

Consolation for poore Christians that finde such plenty of spirituall provision in Gods house: though they feeble penury of earthly things in their owne. For the fruition of the greater, doth counteruail the want of the lesse: and the comfortable refreshings of the soule, will make men more patiently to endure the distresses of the body. *Psal. 63. 1. & 5.* 3

Mingled her wine, &c. It is not the wit of man but the wisdom of God that doth make the ministry of the word comfortable. This doth hee assume to himselfe in a peculiar manner, saying: *I create the fruit of the lippes to bee peace.* It is Isa. 57. 19. as proper to him to giue peace by the preaching of the word, Gods wisdom, not as to giue being and forme to a creature; or to take away the corruption and punishment of sinne. Else what need had *Dan-* mans wit, *iel* to call vpon him to make him heare of ioy and gladnesse? makes the word comfortable, if it had beene in mans power, hee might haue commaunded it at his subiects hands; and the Priests and Prophets would haue thought it a preferment to be admitted to that service: but *Psal. 51. 8.* he knew it was no more possible for the best qualified of them to remoue his sorrow without Gods blessing, then for a surgeon

Reasons. 1

2

geon to cure a wound with his white hand without a plaister. First, ioy is a fruit of the spirit. *Gal. 5. 22.* Secondly, to giue true comfort is to speake to the hart, and to assure it of the pardon of all iniquitie. *Isa. 40. 1.* True it is that men may bee the instruments of both these, but the author of neither.

3

Thirdlie, it is seene by wonted experience, that they which haue the finest wits, the greatest art, and sweetest tongues (not guided by the counsell of God) are lesse profitable in their Ministrie, than men of meaner parts, bringing onelie the power of the word and spirit in their doctrine. *1er. 23. 31.*

Vse. 1.

Reproofoe of such ministers as iudge it a base thing to content themselues with the plaine simplicitie of the Scriptures, but powder their doctrine with the dust of mens deuises, and authorities. Secondly, of such hearers as depend vpon the persons of the preachers, esteeming so far of the Sermon, as the minister is graced with outward ornaments, and according to that rule they measure all the doctrine that is deliuered, and so many times they thinke good wine to bee harsh, because it is brought in a pewter sagon, and vineger very pleasant, because it is brought in a siluer goblet.

2

Terrour to them that distast all kinde of sincere teaching, the more Christ dealeth with it, the more they loath it, nothing is so offensive vnto them as the mixture he maketh; they more abhorre it then gall and wormewood.

Doct. 3.
They that
faithfully seek
Gods fauour,
doe surely
finde it.

Luke. 14. 17.

Reasons. 1

2

Prepared her table. Gods fauour and grace is alwaies ready to be found when it is faithfully sought. Our faith can neuer take him tardy in desiring that at the present which he cannot giue till heereafter, or in beeing before hand to demandaunt that which his ability is behinde hand to performe. The messengers say not in the gospell, be there at such a time, and in the meane while things shall be prepared, or goe with mee now, and dinner will be ready anone, but come, for all things are now ready. The first cause is in respect of God himselfe, whose prouident care hath foreseene what things would be expedient, and his power so sufficient to supplie all wants, that there cannot be the least defect for any one moment. Secondly, in respect of his

his Church and children, whose state doth as much require continuall grace, as the light of a lampe hath neede of oyle to maintaine it.

Confutation of their impious error, that thinke the word and Sacraments containe onely emptie shewes of happines long to come in another world, and nothing present, but dry and withered promises. What is this, but to charge God to be a deceiuer, and being voide of all mercie and fidelitie, to starue his people? We would deem him a miserable mailter or householder, that hauing corne and store of prouision in present, should yet keepe his familie fasting, and feede them onely with a bare hope of haruest to come. The Scripture teacheth it not to bee agreeable to mercie to put off our needy neighbour till to morrow, when we haue wherewith to relieue him to day, and certaine it is, that the Lord doth not require more iustice and compassion of his creatures, then himselfe will shew his owne children. But those men finde the case to be so: they speake by experience, they neuer got any good by comming to such exercises, it is like to bee true, but why? they came not as friends, but as spies, and spies will bee espied out and turned away emptie. The comforts of the word and spirit be prepared for them that loue God. 1. Cor. 2. 9.

Vfe. 1.

Ch. 3. 28.

Instruction, that if we at any time faile of good successe in the seruices of God, that wee impute it to our selues, and not lay the blame vpon his ordinances: they were not barren of vertue and power, but we were wanting in faith or repentance, or in performance of some such duties, whereby we should haue beene better prepared.

2

Consolation, that if we feeble want of any grace, or of power against any sinne, it is neuer out of season to seeke supply, we shall be sure to preuaile whensoever wee faithfully labour for it, and that as God hath grace alwaies ready for vs in this life, so is glory and blessednesse from euermlasting prepared for vs in the life to come. Mat. 25. 34.

3

Verse. 3.

Shee hath sent forth her Maides. &c.

In the former words was shewed what preparation wisdom made for her feast at home, and in these what course she taketh to inuite the guests abroad, her maides are sent forth as messengers into the streetes, and gates, and market place, which commonly are frequented with greatest multitude and concourse of people, to call as many as they can meete with: not that maides or matrons or any women are allowed to bee ministers, but hee prosecuteth the allegory euery part of it correspondent and futable to other, as Christ himselfe vnderstood by wisdom is compared to a Lady, so his Prophets, Apostles, pastors, and teachers are resembled to maides, which in regard of sex are most meete to waite vpon women.

Doct. 1.
The ministry
of the word
the meanes of
saluation by
Gods ordinance,
2. Cor. 5. 18.

God in his wisdom hath appointed that they that will come to saluation, must bee brought to it by the ministrie of his messengers, so the Apostle teacheth, that *all things are of God, which hath reconciled vs vnto himselfe by Iesus Christ, and hath giuen to vs (saith hee) the ministrie of reconciliation*: the father of his owne goodnesse hath vouchsafed to be at one with vs: hee hath appointed his sonne to make the peace, and his word to declare the performance of it by the sonne, and his ministers to publish it by warrant of his word.

Reasons. 1

First, Christ hath substituted them to bee his deputies, and still doth speake to his people by them. 2. Cor. 5. 19.

2

Secondly, our necessitie is such as doth require the help of their ministrie: for wee haue no inclination of our selues to come to this feast vnlesse wee bee sent for: many are readie to presse to corporall banquets, where they haue neither calling nor countenance, but be many times repelled that they cannot get in, or extruded and turned out at the doores before they be satisfied: but to this commeth none without bidding, nor vsually without much vrging.

3

Thirdly, the Lord doth so highly esteeme of their service, and so far obserue them that reiect their counsels and holy instructions that they that will not be directed to euerlasting life by

by them shall neuer attaine vnto it without them. *Luke. 14. 24.*

Instruction to be teachable and tractable to their persuasions so farre as they bring their message from their master, and call vs from the poyson of our owne sinfulness, to the wholesome food of wisdomes feast. *I/a. 50. 20.* Vse. 1.

Reprofe of such as account them vnecessary and vnprofitable, and thrust vpon the people as a trouble, burthen, and charge vnto them: who many times both dispise their doctrine, and persecute their persons. *Mat. 22 6.* 2

Consolation for such as haue them in singular loue for their works sake, dealing kindly with the ministers and taking the benefite of their ministrie: the kindnesse they shew is accepted, as done to Christ, and the promises they receiue be as solide and sure, as if they were deliuered by Christ. 3

Christ Iesus hath appointed the preaching of the gospel to be most publike, that all might be instructed by it. This moued the Apostle to be so industrious in his function, and desirous euery where to preach, both to the Iewes & Gentiles. It was his bounden duetie so to doe: he did owe them that seruice: the Lord bequeathed vnto them the ministry of saluation, and made him an executor of his will, and therefore hee was in their debt, vntill he had discharged it. Doct. 2. Christ would haue the gospel openly taught that all might bee instructed. *Rom. 1. 13. 14.*

First, all the doctrine of God is perfectly true and will hold out at the triall: the more it commeth into the light to bee looked vpon, the more it will bee iustified, to the glorie of the author, the clearing of the ministers and saluation of the faithfull hearers. Reasons. 1.

Secondlie, his goodnesse is such that hee would haue no man to perishe, but would all men to come to repentance. 2. *Peter. 3. 9.* 2

Thirdlie, hee hath ordained it to bee necessarie and effectually for the saluation of all sorts of people. *Titus. 2. 11.* 3

Fourthly, it is expedient for the rebuke of sinfull men. *I/a. 58. 1.* and the comfort of godlie men. *I/a. 40 9* and the edification of all men. *Rom. 16. 26.* 4

Reprofe of Iesuites, Seminaries, and Brownists, which delight to creepe into corners. Secondlie, of ignorant and insufficient

ficient ministers which neuer dwelt in wisedomes familie, nor receiued any messlage from her, and therefore are vtterlie vnable to declare her minde.

Verse. 4.

Who so is simple &c.

Heere is a discription of the guests that be meete for this feast, which in shew seeme most vnmeete, as being most vnlike the Mistresse of the feast: and these are simple persons, destitute of spirituall vnderstanding, yet so as they feelee the want of knowledge, and the waight of their ignorance, and leane no longer on worldly wisedome.

Doct.

The more ignorant we are, the more need we haue of instruction.

Who so. Ignorance is not a cause that should stay men from hearing the word of God, but rather incite them to it.

First, their necessitie doth require it: for who hath more neede of eie-salue, then they whose eies are sore? And who haue more neede of guides, then they who haue lost their sight and are bee-come blinde? And especially when the way is difficult and full of daunger.

The vertue and efficacie that is in the word should allure them vnto it: for it is sufficient to illuminate, and giue light to all that seeke it. *Psal. 19. 7. 8. &c.*

Vsc. 1.

Instruction for the ministers of Christ so to deliuer the doctrine as it may be most plaine and perspicuous to the simple people. *1. Cor. 14. 19. 24.*

2

Reproofe of such as affect obscuritie, that the vulgar sort should not vnderstand them, taking it to be for the glorie of their learning to mount aboue the capacitie of their hearers.

3

Consolation for poore vnlearned men when they come to the Church of God: let them not bee discouraged if their appetite serue them. They are bidden guests, and Christ hath prepared meate for them, and it doth his hart good to see them eate it. That is, hee is well pleased, and doth reioyce that God doth bestow his graces vpon them. *Mat. 11. 52.*

4

Fourthly, for the confutation, first, of the Popish seruice in a strange language, wherein the simple people bee so farre from receiuing any comfort by the matter that is vttered, as that

that they vnderstand not the very woordes that are spoken, and therefore God neuer ordained it for the vse of his Church. Whereupon also followeth, that those priests bee none of wisdomes attendants, beeing neither fit to bee messengers abroad to call the guests, nor to bee officers at home to giue them entertainment. Secondlie, of such as make ignoraunce their appologie for persistance in ignoraunce. It is, say they, for schollers, and men of iudgement to heare sermons, and not for the vilearned. Here is that excuse taken away, and so hath this text hetherto mette with many other shifts and euasions which men haue deuised to exempt their necks from Christ his yoke. First say they, this preaching and other exercises of religion be foolish and rediculus: but wisdomes is the authour thereof. Secondlie, they be dangerous to deale with: but she hath hewen out seauen pillars. Thirdlie, they bee tedious and vnpleasant: but she hath made a banquet. Fourthlie, wee can learne as much by reading good bookes, as the best Preacher can teach vs: but she hath sent forth her maides. Fifthly, sermons are hard to come by, where should wee haue them? She cryeth vpon the hie places. Sixtly, wee are simple men and want vnderstanding: but she saith: *Who so is simple let him come hether, and he that is destitute of vnderstanding &c.*

Come and eate, &c.

Verse. 5.

The exhortation which wisdomes vttered by her maides is againe repeated, to expresse the serious desire and true meaning of the messengers and masters in calling of the guests, and to let them know also, that as they are bidden by way of inuitation, so they are commanded by way of summons, and therefore to adresse themselues thereunto with all expedition. And because it is not their presence onely that is required, but a profitable vse-making of the vnderferued fauour that is shewed vnto them, therefore they are beefore hand informed to what end they are sent for, to eate and drinke of the delicates prepared, which is to receiue the merits and graces of Christ, with the promises of God, and to make them their owne by faith, and particular application.

C.iiij.

It

Doct. 2.
A wicked man
hath his worst
side inward.

But the heart of the wicked, &c. Though sinfull persons make neuer so great a shew on the outside, yet there is nothing within them worth any thing. To that purpose tend the words of the Apostle collected out of the Psalmes: *the Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise to bee but vaine.* If the point had stood vpon mans opinion, there might easily haue beene an errour in it, but he bringeth the testimonie of god vpon sure & infallible knowledge to cōfirme it. And whereas the Prophet nameth man indefinitely, that is, euery man vnregenerate *Psal. 94. 11.* Hee singlet out the chiefe, and choylest of all the sort of them, whose purposes seeme to bee of greatest price, and most likely to preuaile, and sayeth that the thoughts of the wise men best qualified with art; and naturall parts, are not onely vaine, but very vanitie, as the Psalmist hath it.

Reasons, 2.

2

First, they are altogether destitute of the spirit of grace.

3

Secondly, the heart of man, without the spirit, is foule, and filthie, and an vnclane sinke of all abominations.

4

Thirdly, the streames that issue from thence declare what the fountaine is, when all their words, and actions, and recreations, and imaginations are onely sinfull and wicked. *Hag. 2. 15. Tit. 1. 15. Gen. 6. 5.*

Vlc 1.

Fourthly, Gods proceeding against them in his displeasure maketh manifest how base they are: for hee knoweth how all things are to bee priced. Since therefore hee reiecteth and casteth them away, it evidently appeareth that there is no goodnesse in them. So sayth *Ieremie, They shall call them reprobate siluer, because the Lord hath reiected them. Ier. 6. 30.*

2

Instruction, not to much to magnifie and admire them, nor too farre to depend vpon them. For better things are not certainly to be expected from them, than are in them. And therefore many times they make golden promises, and leaden performances, because they haue but drossie affections.

Consolation, to poore Christians in regard of their portion, notwithstanding they come short of the vngodly in goods and liuings. Many sinners bee set vp in state, and much worth in outward wealth, when as they bee worse than bankroupts in their soules, and wholly destitute of all inward substance, and con-

contrary wise though the Saints haue but small store of external riches, yet they bee of great possessions in their hearts, and flow with plentie in their inward parts.

*The lippes of the righteous doe feede many : but fooles die
• for want of wisdom.*

Verse. 21.

Before was declared the excellencie of a good tongue, and well seasoned speech, and heere are the effects of it commended, namely the good that is wrought by it, the soules of many being edified therewith, and receiuing grace, and groweth for saluation, and comfort, as the body doth obtaine strength, and nouriture, and refreshing, by their meanes that minister wholesome foode vnto it. And this is illustrated by the contrarie effect of wicked, and ignorant persons, that they are so farre from feeding others with knowledge and wisdom, that they suffer themselves to be starued to death, & destruction through the want of it.

The lippes of the righteous, &c. It is the note of a faithfull man to vse his knowledge, and other good gifts for the benefit of his brethren. In this sence the Apostle sayth that though he were poore, yet he made many rich. 2. Cor. 6. 10. His meane estate would not permit him, to bestow mony, or such kinde of gifts as wealthie men vse to distribute, because he had no great plentie himselfe : but that which hee had most of, and others had most neede of, that he most liberally communicated to all that would receiue it, wherefoeuer hee came.

Doct.
Hee is the best
man that doth
others most
good.

First, godly men doe provide themselves of these celestiall graces, and thereby are made able to participate them to others. They haue a learning eare, & therefore also a teaching tongue: they be couetous of spirituall gifts, and therefore also liberall of them : they are great eaters, and as we may say, haue an appetite to deuoure all, and therefore would haue euery man to take part with them. In earthly commodities, men are of a contrary disposition : for as they are the more greedie of getting to themselves, so are they more niggardly in withholding from others : and as any one doeth swallow vp more, the lesse is left for the rest of the company : but in heauenly things it com-

Reasons. 1

Isa. 50. 4.

meth to passe that none be so frank and free, as they whose desires be most greedie of hauing, and none doe saue, and leaue so much for the vse of their brethren, as they that take their full meale, and eate as much as possibly they can. To take the fruition of the graces of God, is the way to make prouision of them for our neighbours : and to bestow vpon others is the meanes to retaine and augment them to our selues.

- 2 Secondly, they haue an vnderstanding heart, and holy discretion to giue to every one such a portion, as is fittest for the health of his soule : some are ignorant, and haue need of instruction : some are vnruely, and haue neede of rebuke : some are weake, and haue neede to be confirmed : some are fearefull, and feeble, and haue neede of comfort, and encouragement. All these duties will a wise and righteous man exercise, according to the proportion, measure, and degrees of his wisdom, and righteousness.

- 3 Thirdly, their lips will send a message to heauen, & deale with the Lord to releue them, whose wants themselves are not able to supply. And so they do not onely feed the soules, but euen the bodies of very many. When their prayers and prayes are accepted of God, and made effectuell, for the fruitfulness of the earth: *Psal. 67. 5. 6. Joel, 2. 17. 19.* And by this meanes *Eliab* did feede all *Israel*, by procuring rayne, for want whereof they were like to perish. All *Achabs* wealth, and the riches and power of the whole kingdome, were insufficient for such a work.

Vc. 1.

Reproofe, of them that neuer ministred any thing, but infection to their people for their soules. No child, no seruant, no not the wife of their owne bosome, had euer any help by them to saluation. Their houses be nurceries, & seminaries of swearing, and gamning, and drinking, and all kindes of sinfulness. An ignorant and vngodly family so allowed, and continued, doth conuince the gouernour to be a sinner, a foole, and a kind of murderer of himselfe, as the other part of the verse sheweth, which shall bee passed ouer now, because it hath bene partly handled already, and must bee againe heereafter.

2

Secondly, Instruction to make choyse of habitation, and societie.

societie with iust men : for much commoditie is to bee had in their company, by the benefite of their fruitfull tongue.

The blessing of the Lord, it doth make rich, and he addeth no sorrows with it.

Verse. 12.

The purpose and drift of these words is, to shew the pre-
heminence that Gods people haue, aboue the men of the
world : that whereas the wicked haue nothing but their owne
hands, and carnall meanes to trust vnto for their estate; such as
be Godly, haue God to prouide for them, and his goodnesse
onely doth make rich, and they onely are enriched by him.
But because his enemies haue vsually more store of goods then
his children, and thereby it may seeme, that either men, may
be rich without his blessing, or else that he is more prouident
for sinners, then for saints; therefore he sheweth the difference,
that troubles and vexations are intermingled with the goods of
the wicked, and his seruants are freed from them. Yet it is not
so to bee conceiued, as though no good men had any troubles
with their riches, and that whosoever doth finde griefe, and per-
turbations in these earthly things, were deprived of the bles-
sing of God, and testimonies of his fauour: but this is the mea-
ning, that so farre as hee doth beestow them, and they depend
vpon him for them, so far they escape from vexations; so that
the cares and troubles grow meerely from their owne infir-
mities.

The blessing, &c. As euermlasting life is the gift of God, so is
a good and comfortable estate in this world. *David* in his
thanksgiuing to God maketh a free confession thereof : say-
ing, *both riches, and honour come of thee, &c.* 1. *Chron.* 29. 12.

Doct.

A comfortable
estate is a bles-
sing of God.

First, neither the commodiousnesse of any trade, nor skill,
nor strength, nor diligence can preuaile, vnlesse hee giue suc-
cesse. *Deut.* 8. 18. *Psal.* 117. 1. 2.

Reasons. 1.

Secondly, he alone worketh contentment, which is an high
degree of richnesse.

2

Thirdly, he giueth a chearefull heart with the portion, and
causeth

3

causeth them to take their part of their possessions with comfort. *Eccle. 2. 24.*

4

Fourthly, hee preserveth them from the feares of losses whiles they enjoy their goods, and from immoderate sorrow if their substance bee taken away: as that appeared in the example of *Iob*, who by his patience declared himselfe to be as rich when all his goods were gone, as hee was at that time when he possessed them all.

Vñ. 1.

Instruction, to use the meanes that we may be blessed, and partakers of his promises. And that is: first, by pietie and religion. *Psal. 112. 1. 2.* Secondly, by calling vpon the name of God, and exercise of prayer for such things as are needefull for vs. *Iames. 4. 2.* Thirdly, by the good imployment and v-sage of those things which wee enjoy already. *Pron. 3. 9. 10.* Fourthly, by mercie and liberalitie to them that are in necessitie. *Pron. 11. 24. 25.* Fifthly, by faithfulnessse and diligence in our places and callings, as hath beene shewed in the fourth verse.

2

Consolation to such as serve him, that they shall surely be stored with all sufficiency. Those whom he will raise vp to wealth, shall certainly rise, though neuer so many seeke to hold them downe: for who shall hold backe his hands from giuing his owne, vnto his owne. How maruailously were *Abraham* and *Iacob* enriched among strangers, and infidels, not onely aliants from their religion, but vowed enemies to their nation? And where in his wisdom hee seeth it not fit to fill their houses with ampltude of substance, he will make fewe things to yeeld many comforts, and small things to bee of great force, and meane things to be very precious and excellent. *Psal. 37. 16.*

3

Terrour for the wicked, that they can never be rich: though they haue riches. yet they are not rich, but onely plagued with a multitude of torments and vexations. *Eccle. 2. 26.*

It is a pastime to a foole to commit wickednesse : but wisdom is the delight of a man of vnderstanding.

Verse. 33.

It is a pastime to a foole to commit wickednesse, &c. That is, sinfull men take great pleasure in doing that which is euill, as if it were a sport, or recreation to them : and it is as much ioy, and refreshing to him that is Godly wise, both to get wisdom, and to performe all the good exercises thereof.

Sinne is the delight of sinners, and grace of good men. Of the one sort wee haue many testimonies in this booke, but in the second Chapter especially, ver. 14. They delight in doing euill, and reioyce in wicked frowardnesse. And in the fourth Chapter ver. 17. it is said, *that they eat the bread of wickednesse, and drinke the wine of violence, it is meate and drinke vnto them to doe mischief.* Of the other sort the Prophet is an example and patterne, in the hundred and ninetenth Psalm: where in many places he professeth his singular comfort and delight, that he conceiueth in the heavenly word of God, as when hee saith : *how sweete are thy promises vnto my mouth ? yea more then hony vnto my mouth. And they are the ioy of mine heart.* Psal. 119. 103. 111.

Doct.

Sinne is a pastime to sinners, and grace is the ioy of good men.

First, this contrarietie ariseth from the contrary causes of these contrarie likings. All wicked men doe loue sinne, and it is as deare vnto them as the members of their owne bodies. And all godly men doe loue righteousness, and rather desire to be deliuered from life, then separated from grace, and the seruices of God. Now it is a perpetuall rule which neuer faileth, that whatsoeuer any man loueth most, that hee will alwaies most delight in. Secondly, wicked men are fleshly, and therefore line after the flesh, and saueur of the things of the flesh, and delight in the workes of the flesh. And godly men are led by the spirit, and saueur of the things of the spirit, and reioyce in the fruites of the spirit.

Reasons. 1.

Secondly, it is seene in the contrary effects of both sides. First, wicked men runne violently to sinne, and will not desist from their diuellish purposes, before they haue effected them: though godly men through naturall corruptions, and temptations, haue sometimes a pronenesse, and inclination to euill,

2

P.

yet

yet they may be easily retracted by counsell, and admonition, as *David* was from slaying of *Nabal*, but they constantly proceede to the performance of euery good dutie. Secondly, wicked men doe meditate in the night, and indeauour in the day to fulfill their sinfull desires: *Micah. 2. 1.* Godly men doe meditate in the night, and indeauour in the day, to know and obey the holy will of the Lord. *Isa. 26. 9.* Thirdly, when wicked men haue accomplished their sinfull desires, they surfeit with gladnesse: when they are disappointed they are filled with bitter vexation. *Prou. 4. 16.* When godly men haue committed sinne, it bringeth anguish vpon their hearts, when they haue performed any Christian seruice, it is a comfortable refreshing to their soules. Fourthly, the custome of sinning is so sweete to the wicked, that they will not forsake it, but take them for their enemies that shall dissuade them from it: the yoke of sinne is heauie to the Godly, that they still strue to be disburthened of it, and the yoke of Iesus so easie that they willingly yeeld themselves to it, and account them their best friends that shall help them against the one, and further them to the other.

Iob. 20, 12.

Vse. 1.

Confutation of the rorionous opinion of those, that allowing themselves in the pursuite of all sinfull pleasures; and profits, euen seruing their lusts with delight, and working vndeannesse with greedinesse, doe yet vndertake for the safetie of their owne soules, and challenge the name, and prerogative of righteous men.

2

Consolation, to them that are wearied with the rebellious motions of the flesh, that are not able vtterly to subdue the remnants of sinne, and their owne naturall disposition, but that sometimes their pride giueth them a wound; sometimes their rage breaketh out sodainly, & striketh them so that the prints of the strokes are scene, and the scarres which remaine after them; sometimes couetousnesse presseth so hard vpon them, that it maketh them to giue ground, yea it taketh, and imprisoneth them: yet if they hate these corruptions the more because they haue ben hurt by them, if they labour for libertie, and groane for deliuerance out of their captiuitie, they are still reputed wise, and the faithfull souldiers, & seruants of Christ.

That

*That which the wicked feareth, shall come upon him :
but God will graunt the desire of the righteous.*

Verse. 24.

The condemnation in the world to come, which vngodly men through the guiltinesse of their consciences are often summoned vnto, when God shall draw their soule out of their body, they shall certainly fall into. And those iudgements, and miseries of this life, which they most hate, though they hope to escape them, they are in danger to bring vpon themselves.

And that which is most desirable, and will be most comfortable to Christians, the Lord which knoweth what is most acceptable to them, and profitable for them, will in due season bestow vpon them.

That which the wicked feareth, &c. Whatsoeuer is most contrary to the affection, and liking of sinfull persons, that they may expect to be plagued withall. This the Lord threatened to the rebellious and obstinate Iewes by the Prophet *Ezekiell*, *I will take from them their power, the ioy of their honor, the pleasure of their eyes, and the desire of their heart, their sonnes and their daughters. Ezek. 24. 25.* The things which they are altogether vnwilling to depart with, those would hee strip them of : and consequently, that which they would bee very loath to beare, should heauily bee laid vpon them.

Doct. 1.
That which ill
men most fear
shall surely be-
fall them.

First, ordinarily they feare that which is the most proportionable, & proper punishment of their offences. As proud men haue nothing in so great detestation, as reproach, & contempt, and nothing is so much due vnto them as to bee contemned.

Reason. 1.

Secondly, their feare and dread of falling into those euils, doth cause them to seeke the preuention of them by euill meanes, and thereby they take the way to inforce the speedie execution of them. As they that would flie farre from necessitie and want, by hasty getting of riches, and substance, doe very often prouoke pouertie to come swiftly with violence vpon them. *Prou. 28. 22.*

2

Thirdly, the Lord doth make choise of, and singlet out such manner of iudgements as shall most sting them, & come nearest to their hearts, and those are they which are most ter-

3

Joel. 5.
Isa. 3. 16. 17. &c

rible to them. What could haue beene so grieuous to *Haman*, as first to bee made *Mordecayes* page, and then afterwards to bee hanged vpon the gallows, then which nothing could bee inuented more horrible to him, and therefore hee had prouided it for *Mordecay* whom hee most mortally hated?

Vse,

Instruction, first to fence our selues against the imitation of the wicked, and desire of their state, by considering how wretched, and miserable their condition is. Euen presently they are arrested, and after a sort apprehended with feares: hell and destruction doe sometimes shew themselves vnto their soules; and in time to come, vnlesse they repent, they shall haue full possession of them. Secondly, to free our selues from all our feares, by flying to the Lord for succour, against the mischiefs which we would not fall into, & for repentance & humiliation against the sins that wold draw them vpon our heads,

Doct. 2.
Good mens
desires shall be
graunted.

But God will graunt, &c. The best way to haue our wills satisfied, is to bee Godly. For to such there is a promise made that God will fulfill the desires of them that feare him. Wherin yet these rules are to bee obserued: First, that our will bee agreeable to Gods will, the desire must bee holy, and seasoned with the spirit; and not carnall, and corrupted by the flesh. *Dauid* in a passion would needes know how long hee was to liue. And *Iames* and *Iohn* would haue fire to come from heauen to destroy a whole towne, and an other time they made sute to bee the second men of the whole earth. These petitions were not graunted, because they were not aduisedly asked, nor safe for them to bee obtained. Secondly, that sometimes lawfull desires are not performed in the same kinde, but exchanged for better, and that which doth more good is bestowed in steede of them. *Moses* desired to enter into the land of Canaan, hee was denied that, but hee entred sooner into the heauenly and blessed rest of euerlasting life. *Paul* would haue beene perfectly freed from all originall corruption, or at least from the stirrings, and working of it, but it stode not with the wisdom of God to yeeld that vnto him: but hee assisted him with grace against it, which was much more for his owne glory, and the sound comfort of *Pauls* conscience.

Psal. 145. 19.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, that wee tarry the Lords leasure, and depend on his hand, to minister in fittest time, all those good things which our soules desire, and so wee shall not faile to receive them, when hee seeth that they will bee most expedient for vs.

First, hee rayseth vp the heart to seeke for them, hee inclineth the soule, so much to long after them, and therefore it was his purpose to bestow them. *Psal. 10. 17.*

Secondly, he giueth the spirit of faith, & prayer which will haue no nay: they neuer sustaine any repulse, whatsoeuer they lay hold on, they make it their owne. *Iohn. 15. 7. 1. Ioh. 5. 14. 15.*

Thirdly, hee calleth vs to him by commandement to seeke all good things at his hand, and encouragerth vs to the same by promises. *Psal. 27. 4.* and therefore his owne truth is our securitie for them.

Fourthly, his all sufficiencie, and absolute abilitie for performance doth abundantly exceede all the desires of all the faithfull, yea of all creatures, though they were neuer so ample, and feruent. *Ephes. 3. 20.*

First, consolation to righteous men, against the defects that are in their soules, and the necessities of state, and body, they are best provided for both: for so great is the credite which they haue in the court of heauen, and their fauour with the king of heauen, that they aske, and haue: desire, and preuaile: and if they bee not forward inough that wayes, they shall bee called vpon to put in their petitions, and enlarge their desires. *Iohn. 16. 24. Psal. 81. 10.*

Secondly, terror for their enimies, that by tyranny, and violence compell them to complaine of them. So far as the Lord is readie to gratifie them by granting all good things which they aske, so far is he also prouoked to punish their aduersaries and oppressors that cause them to cry.

*As the whirle winde passeth, so is the wicked no more:
but the righteous is an euermlasting foundation.*

The meaning of the words is, that vngodly men, howsoeuer they flourish for a time, yet doe sodainely come to ruine, and destruction, as the whirle-winde swiftly bloweth ouer, and

Reasons. 1.

2

3

4

Verse. 1.

2

Verse. 25.

is lesse constant, and permanent then the ordinary winde is, though there bee no stabilitie in any. But when it is said, *they are no more*, he doth not intimate any mortalitie of their foules, as though they should be wholly dissolued as brute beasts: for their foules are euerlasting as well as Gods peoples, and their bodies shall be raised vp againe at the day of the Lord aswell as the Saints: but it is their hope and happinesse, and not their being: that perisheth, they shall neuer recover any good estate any more. Now against these are set the righteous, whose soule, and body, and blessednesse haue a settled safetie as a foundation that can neuer be remoued: So that this is the opposition: the wicked are as a whirle-winde, and so are no more: but the righteous are like a firme foundation, and so perpetually remaine.

Doct.
Vngodly men
haue fare
shows: but
good men
haue a firme
foundation.

Hos. 13. 3.

Mat. 7. 25.

Reason. 1.

Though the state of the vngodly be more ruffling, then the seruants of God, yet the state of Gods seruants is more certaine and stable then the vngodly ones. The whirle winde mounteth aloft, and tosseth vp hay, and straw, and stubble, and filleth mens eyes with dust, and cometh violently vpon them with a blustering blast, but immediately it is gone, & passed far away: the foundation lyeth low in the ground, and is neither seene, nor heard, yet there it continueth immoueable for many generations. The vnconstant, and tickle estate of wicked men is fitly expressed by liuely comparisons in the prophesie of Hosea. *They shall be as the morning cloud, and as the morning dew that passeth away as the chaffe that is driuen with a whirle wind out of the floore, and as the smoake that goeth out of the chimney.* The contrary firmitude, and stabilitie of the Godly is by our Sauour himselve likened to an house that is built on a rocke: *and the raine fell, and the floods came, and the windes blew, and beat that house, and it fell not: for it was grounded on a rocke.*

First, the one sort haue beene as vnconstant in their waies, and as easily blownen from sin to sinne, as the chaffe, and dust, and withered leaues haue beene carried vp and downe with the winde, and if they haue entred into any good course, there haue beene no more stedfastnesse in them, then is in the morning cloud, and morning dewe. *Isa. 64. 6. Hos. 6. 4.* The other

ther haue rooted and settled aswell in faith, as in all faithfull behauiour: and for these causes the one side slitteth away, and is gone to misery, & the other remaine happy & blessed for euer.

Secondly, the one sort haue God, and his Angells to pursue, and push them away: the other haue God, and his Angells to vphold, and confirme them, that they be not moued from the fruition of his fauour.

Terrour, for sinfull men whose short and momentanie prosperitie shall so speedily and sodainely be turned into miserie.

Instruction, first, not to affect the pleasures of sin, wherein may be a continuall expectation of suddaine destruction. Secondly, not to repose affiance in any wicked person, for though there were some constancie in their hearts, or mouthes, which seldome or neuer falleth out, yet there is none in their life and estate. *Psal. 146. 3. 4.*

Consolation to such as are molested with the bovsterous tempests of wicked men: though they rore lowd, they shall not rage long, the Lord will put a speedie end to their crueltie. *Isa. 29. 19. 20. & 51. 13. 14.*

As vineger is to the teeth, and smoake to the eyes, so is the slothfull to them that send him.

Verse. 26.

As vineger, &c. That is, too much vineger, or other things that be sharp, and soure, doe set the teeth an edge, and smoake doth bring both smart, and hurt to the eyes: so doth the slothfull person, or he that is giuen to any other lewd behauiour, doth worke vexation of heart to them that send him, or commit matter of moment vnto him.

Doct.
We must bee
carefull whom
we imploy in
our affaires.

He that imployeth in any seruice, vnworthie and carelesse persons, shall bring sorrow and molestation vpon himselfe.

There is another prouerbe which tendeth to the same purpose, though the similitude be different: As though he should cut off his messengers feete, so hee drinketh violence, or hurt, that sendeth a message by a foole. *PROM. 26. 6.* He doth as much iniurie to himselfe, as if he should maime his messenger of his feete, or make him lame of his legs: for as the one in that case should not be able to dispatch his iourney, so neither can the
other

other well performe the things that are committed to his care and wisedome. It is a speech that is ordinarie in vse, that hee must neuer looke to speede well that sendeth a foole on his errand.

Reasons. 1.

First, there is perill of falsehood, and treachery, or of much remissenesse, and negligence, or want of discretion, and skilfulnesse, by all which there groweth hurt, or losse, or trouble to him that put him in trust with his affaires, as *Mephibosheth*, and *Benhadad* found by the services of *Ziba* and *Hazaell*.

2.

The curse of God doth vsually accompany the actions and waies of cursed sinners, and therefore they that aduenture to entertaine them, haue many times a part of the punishment with them.

3.

Thirdly, all the faults, and absurdities in word, or worke, of foolish and sinfull seruants are imputed to the reproch of their maisters that employ them, and so the sorrow is caused by shame and infamie.

4.

Fourthly, the contrary will cleare the truth of this point. For if good seruants and faithfull messengers, be for the comfort, and credit, the safetie & profit of such as do vse them, then they that are altogether of an other manner of affection, and disposition, cannot but worke an other manner of effects, and consequents.

Vse. 1.

Admonition, to bee very heedefull to auoide that noisome sinne of slothfulnesse which bringeth so many michiefes with it, both to our selues, for soule, and body, and state, and name: and to others also, and those especially whom in speciall manner we owe dutie vnto. Secondly, to make a wise choise prouidently of such as wee haue occasion to vse in any businesse, that their industry and diligence, their prudenzie and discretion, their faithfulnessse and sound dealing, may bee a refreshing and not a torment to vs. *Pron. 25, 13. 3.* If wee haue obtained such as bee not as smoake to offend our eyes, but our eyes may behold them, and their good behauiour with delight, let vs not bee vineger to their teeth, or smoake to their eyes: let not our sournesse and discontentment, our niggardlinesse and ouermuch sparing, be any meanes of their discouragement.

Deale

Deale kindly with them, and bee liberall to them, that thou maist not onely retaine them still to be thy seruants, but giue all good furtherance to the continuance of their vprightnesse.

The feare of the Lord increaseth the daies : but the yeares of the wicked are cut short.

Verse. 27.

The feare of the Lord, &c. That is true pietie, and religion, with the exercise also of iustice, and righteousnesse, *increaseth the dayes*, That is, as a meanes it preferueth those that are indued with it, from an vntimely death : *but the yeares of the wicked shall bee cut off.* Their vngodly and sinfull course of life is sometimes an instrument to bring them speedily to their end, as by surfets, and euill diseases, or falling into the hands of the magistrate, or by quarreling, and such like. Sometimes it prouoketh the Lord to stay them in the midst of their race, and not to suffer them to come to that age which by their strength and constitution of body they might haue attained vnto. And in this sence the Prophet saith in the Psalmes, *that the wicked shall not line out halfe their dayes.* This doctrine of this verse hath beene handled already in the cleauenth verse of the former Chapter.

The patient abiding of the righteous, shall be gladnesse : but the hope of the wicked shall perish.

Verse. 28.

After that the children of God haue once imbraced his promises, afflictions and temptations doe vsually ensue thereupon, that it would seeme to sence and fleshly reason, that misery and troubles were the onely rewards of pietie, and obedience, and nothing else performed to them that trust in his word. Now therefore he sheweth that a better state and condicion remaineth for them : that their sorrow shalbe turned into ioy, & their mourning into gladnes, when the Lord shall deliuer them from troubles, and fulfill all his promises. Which is illustrated and further amplified by the contrary case of the wicked : which, howsoeuer now they seeme to haue the preheminance, and are most likely to preuaile heereafter, shall yet be deprived of their present prosperitie, & frustrated of all future expectation. This

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then is the opposition: The hope of the righteous shall preuaile, and bring them gladnesse: but the hope of the wicked shall perish, and so worke them sorrow.

Doct.
They that in
affliction wait
on God shall
timely finde
ease,

The patient abiding, &c. They which depend on God in their afflictions, shall in due season be deliuered from them. Vpon this ground an exhortation is rayed in an other place of this booke. *Let thy heart be in the feare of the Lord continually. For surely there is an end, and thy hope shall not be cut off. Prou. 23. 17. 18.* Though troubles and sorrowes are in appearance, perpetual, & endlesse, yet they are but temporarie, and come quickly to an end: though hope, & possibilitie of help seeme readie continually to vanish away, yet it neuer ceaseth, nor is taken away.

Reasons, 1.

First, there is nothing in all the world that is more infallible assured of certaine successe, then the hope of christians. It neuer misleth of that which it aymeth at, nor any time disappointeth them that possesse it. *Rom. 8. 25.* For faith doth support it, & the truth and fidelitie of God himselfe is the foundation of it.

2

Prou. 13. 12.

Secondly, that which is long delayed, and much waited for is the more welcome, and acceptable when it is performed: so sayth the holy Ghost. *The hope that is deferred, is the fainting of the hart: but when the desire commeth it is a tree of life.* The vertue of it cureth al the former faintings, & the delightfull tast doth swallow vp all the sorrowes. If *Isaacke* had bene borne to *Abraham*, or *Iacob* to *Isaacke* the first yeere after they were married, their ioy would haue bene but ordinarie, whereas the long barrennesse made their birthes exceeding comfortable to them, as the benefits were memorable to posteritie.

3

Thirdly, the delay doth draw out manie prayers to God, and maketh way to attention at the ministerie of the word, it helpeth meditation, it leadeth to faithfull comforters, it furthereth good conferences, it procureth al good exercises, & all these good exercises procure a proportionable measure of comfort.

4

Fourthly, it giueth men experience of their faith, and patience, and constancie, which all declare, and testifie the soundnesse and sinceritie of the heart, which is the roote of sound and holy comfort.

5

Fifthly, the longer it is before the Lord doth performe his promises,

promises, the larger his mercies are when hee doth bestow his blessings, whē he prolongeth his seeding, he prouideth a plentiful harvest: when he doth not presentlie giue the reward, he taketh time to tell out much, that his gifts may be the greater.

Encouragement to patience in all distresses, let vs tarric the Vse. 1.

Lords leasure, and waite vpon him, and he hath by word & writing, by seale, & oath vndertaken to deliuer vs out of them. Our samour promiseth that in the greatest troubles, when they should be most violently, & treacherously, & vnnaturallie persecuted, not onely of forraigne aduersaries but of their domestical familiars, of their friends, of their kinsmen, of their brethren, of their owne parents; yet not one haire of their heads should perish. Their haire and heads might be cut off, and life might be taken away, but not lost, they should not bee vainely bestowed, without good effect in a holy cause. Onely he admonisheth vs

Luke. 21. 18. 19.

to possesse our selues with patience. If we keepe all sound within, euery thing shall be safe both within and without. And then we begin to lose our aduantage when we leaue the possession of our selues, and the power of our soules through distempers.

2

Reproofe of them that make more hast than good speede to shake off their crosses, by corrupt courses. They deprive the Lord of that honor which they should yeeld to him, in waiting for his help, and themselves of that comfort which hee would haue yeelded to them together with his help. Their ioy will wither as corne that is cut downe before it be ripe, and become abortiue as a stil-borne childe, whereof the mother miscarieth.

Doct. 2.

But the hope, &c. Vngodly men beguile themselves with a deceitfull expectation of happines. For the same point is shortly after repeted againe in the next Chapter, ver. 7. *When a wicked man dyeth his hope perisheth.* When good men enter vpon possession of their happie estate, the terme of sinners is out, and their lease determined, and growne out of date.

Ill men seeking to be happy deceive themselves,

Reasons, 1

First, the Lord knoweth their purposes, desires, and expectations, and will duely defeat them of the same. *Psal. 1. 6.*

2

Secondly, their hope ariseth not frō faith, nor is grounded on the promises of the word, but on sence, & sight of presēt prosperity.

3

Thirdly, they hope for things which are altogether impossible

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ble to come to passe. As first, to see the euerion and ouerthrow of Gods people. *Psal. 112. 10. Mica. 4. 11. 12.* Secondly, that God should faile of his iustice & truth in executing his threatnings denounced against them. *Deut. 29. 20.* Thirdly, to take their fill of sinfull pleasures heere, and to enioy also felicitie and happinesse in the life to come. *Luke 16. 21.*

Vic.

Confutation & terrours for them that liue ignorantly, & impiouslie, & yet trust to die blessedly, & obtaine euerlasting life: They haue no other euidence for safetie from damnation, but their opinion that they haue a strong faith, & whatsoeuer the preachers say, they regard it not, they trust that god will be more mercifull then so, they hope to be saued as well as the best of them all. For so their comparisons run: ordinarie Christians are too base for them to compare with, they must equalize themselves with the chiefe and principall.

Verse. 29.

The way of the Lord is strength to the vpright man: but feare shall bee to the workers of iniquitie.

By the way of the Lord, is meant his whole administation, both of his word, whereby he maketh his will knowne, and of his spirit whereby he giueth grace, & of his providence, whereby he protecteth his seruants, and performeth all good things vnto them. By euerie one of these meanes, doeth he establish & confirme both the hearts & states of such as be faithfull. But as for the wicked, howsoeuer he suffer them for a time to proceed in their vngodly waies without anie great crosses, yet at last he executeth such iudgements vpon them, as the verie sight thereof causeth them to quake and tremble. Thus standeth the opposition. The way of the Lord is strength to the vpright, for preservation, and therefore it worketh boldnesse: but it weakeneth the wicked for destruction, and therefore it bringeth feare.

Doct. 1.

The way of the Lord, &c. They that are most godly, are in best safetie. The point hath bene handled in the first verse of the former chapter, concerning wisdomes seauen pillars.

Doct. 2.

They that are most forward to sin are most terrified at the

But feare, &c. They that be most bold & ventrous to sinne, shall be most frighted with the punishments of it. In the 14. P/. the Prophet describing the conceits, conuersation, & condition of irreligious miscreants, doth bring them in at the first, saying that

that there is no God, and therefore they corrupt and doe abhominable works : but afterwards declaring the event, hee sheweth that there they are taken with feare, and as the words are, they feared with feare, intimating the greatnesse of their dread and terror. *Psal. 14. 5.* An example whereof we haue set downe before; namely, the foole-hardinesse, and cowardlinesse that was found in *Belshazzar. Dan. 5.*

First, the great guiltinesse that is in their consciences doth dismay their harts, and daunt their courages. Reasons. 1.

Secondly, the Lord doth shew himselfe terrible in his iudgements, and they finde and feelee that they are not able to stand before him. *Isa. 33. 14. Apoc. 6. 16. 17.* 2.

Thirdly, their foolish flattery whereby they haue illuded themselves, hath brought this misery vpon them, For they presumed of peace & safety, and so their destruction commeth so dainely without resistance. *1. Thes. 5. 3.* And so it is said in another place : *They shall bee taken with feare, where no feare was,* that is, where was no suspicion of feare, or likelihood of danger. *Psal. 53. 5.* 3.

Instruction, to preuent sin by fearing the iudgements that will ensue vpon it. *Iob. 31. 3.* Secondly, to preuent the punishments, after that wee haue sinned, by a holy voluntary feare and humiliation. *2. Cor. 7. 11.* Thirdly, to confirme our selues in both these, by fearing and trembling at the word of the Lord. *Isa. 66. 2. Habac. 3. 16.* Vse.

The righteous shall neuer be remoued, but the wicked shall not dwell in the earth. Verse. 30.

The righteous shall neuer be remoued. They shall neuer be remoued from Gods fauour : they shall neuer be remoued from the constant graces of the spirit in their soules: or hurtfully, in the way of a curse, from an outward good estate, nor vnseasonably be cut off from the earth. Now because some of these iudgements doe seeme sometimes to fall vpon some righteous persons, who for a season be eclipsed of grace, and separated from the fruition and comfortable sight of Gods kindenesse, and fauour towards them, & their estate in appearance is wholly ruined

nated and ouerthrowne, therefore the word doth well beare it, agreeably to the meaning of the holy Ghost, to say, that *the righteous shall not be removed for ever*. Though they seeme to be cast downe for a time, yet they shall be restored againe afterwards. The contrary is heere affirmed concerning the case of the wicked, who shall certainly fall vnlesse they repent: they shall not continue in that estate wherein they are most grounded, and haue greatest establishment, they are so far from inioying eternall life in heauen, as that the vengeance of God will not permit them long to keepe their owne breath, or to hold the outward possessions of the earth. The opposition therefore in effect is this: *The righteous shall neuer be removed*, but haue an habitation for ever in heauen: but the wicked shall be removed, and not suffered so much as to dwell in the earth, the sence is the same with, verse. 25.

Verse. 31.

The mouth of the righteous will be fruitfull in wisdom, but the tongue of the vnrighteous shall be cut out.

This verse agreeth altogether in substance of matter with the eleauenth: onely the comparison is altered: for there the tongue of a good man for the constant store of holy speeches, was resembled to a plentifull fountaine, and heere to a fruitfull tree, or fertile field: & there the wicked for lewd speeches was threatned to haue his mouth stopped, and heere to haue his tongue cut out, that is, the iudgements of god vpon him for his vngracious and cursed speakings shall strike him as mute and dumbe, as if the tongue were cut out of his head.

Verse 32.

The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable, but the mouth of the wicked speaketh froward things.

The meaning of these words is, that a righteous man knoweth & regardeth what is best pleasing to God for him to speak, and what is most gratefull to good men to heare, & what doth deserue acceptation at any mans hand for faithfulness & truth, and therefore he will vse his lips to vtter it: but the wicked neither knoweth nor regardeth these things, and therefore he vomiteth out onely peruerse speeches, such as tend to rebellion against

against God, the damnifying of men, and the annoyance and hurt of his owne selfe.

The lips. It is a point of godly wisdom for a man so to speak as his words may be accepted for his best advantage. This appeareth by manifold examples of holy men in the Scriptures of God, when the Ephraimites were imbittered against *Gedon*, and chide with him sharply, how easily did he still them, abating their spirits with a mild and modest answer: *Iudg. 8. 2.* When *David* was in a great rage, comming with a purpose to destroy *Nabal* & his whole familie: how readily was *Abigail*'s mind instructed with vnderstanding, and her lips provided of prudent speeches, wherby she presently pacified his displeasure? *1. Sam. 25. 23. 24.* This skill also had *David* himself to win the hearts of his people, & to hold them fast vnto him by the wisdom of his words: yea by the force and efficacie thereof he made the heart of bloody *Saul* his cruell and implacable enemy for a time to relent. What shall we say of *Paul*, who knew what words would draw his mortal foes to turne after a sort to be his friends, his persecuters to preserve him; the Priests and Pharises to stand for the defence of th'apostle of Christ?

Doct.
He speaks
wisely whose
words make
most for his
advantage.

First, the word and spirit of God doth informe his servants in this knowledge, and give them discretion to apply themselves to the state of the persons and season. *Isa. 50. 4.*

Secondly, the vse & exercise of gracious & religious speeches doth bring a dexteritie to iudge what is most meete to be spoken, and to deliver the same in the aptest manner: and so (as trained souldiers) they are in a continuall readinesse, vpon due occasion, to deale with God and all sorts of people. *Col. 4. 6.*

2

Confutation of all Popish praiers which are offered without any assurance of acceptance, and consequently it conuinceth all Popish persons to be vnrighteous men, because they know not what is acceptable: for so much they plainelie declare, when they pronounce they know not what, in a strange language, when they call vpon the dead which hear them not at all: when they intertaine strange aduocates to vsurp Christ his office: when they aske things needlesse, as the saluation of such as are actually and absolutely saued: when they aske things which

Vse. 13

are

are botelesse, as the deliuerance of the wicked are irreconurable damned. And their best apologie for their sinning is, that if they doe no good, they will doe no harme, and that they make profession that they are vncertaine whether their prayers bee like to please God, or otherwise be vaine.

Reprose, with tenour for them whose mouthes speake forward things, which may know that their words are gratefull to none but the diuell, and damnable men, who wittingly and willingly, and spitefully with greedy desire, doe belch out such bitter blasphemies, and other cursed speeches, as may offend the maiestie of God, and grieue the hearts of his children: which they doe of purpose to professe that they are neither seruants to the one, nor members of the other, but vowed enemies of both: but doe they prouoke the Lord to wrath, and not themselves to the confusion of their owne faces? doe they assault the glorious name of god, & strike at him with their virulent & venomous tongues, and shall not he set vpon them, and destroy their soules and bodies with his grievous plagues and fearefull iudgements? Euen this is a principal cause, together with whoredome, and other finnes of death, that casteth so many into the magistrates hand, and bringeth them to an ignominious end, for stealth, and robberies, for murthers, and most hellish and abhominable treasons.

Consolation to them that order their lips aright, they shote not at an vncertaine marke: they may as well know how they shall speede, as how they speake, though their counsels or rebukes be not sometimes well taken of men, yet at all times they are pleasing to the Lord, who will also requite them with a glorious and blessed reward.

FINIS.